

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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SUBJ: SCANDINAVIAN TRADE UNION RELATIONS WITH
PORTUGUESE LABOR

REF A) EC BRUSSELS 2528 B) STOCKHOLM 1408

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SUMMARY: IN A RECENT CONVERSATION, JOHN SVENNINGSSEN, INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE DANISH TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO), GAVE LABATT A REVIEW OF SCANDINAVIAN TRADE UNION RELATIONS WITH THE PABOR MOVEMENT IN PORTUGAL, THE NORWEGIAN AND THE SWEDISH LO'S, HE SAID, HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY PUSHING FOR DIRECT NORDIC RELATIONS WITH THE INTERSINDICAL WHILE THE DANES HAVE OPPOSED ANY SUCH CONTACT AS HARMFUL TO SCARES' SOCIALISTS. THIS DIVERGENCE OF VIEWS LAY BEHIND THE NORDIC PROPOSAL FOR A RELAXATION OF THE "VIENNA DECLARATION" PRINCIPLES AT MARCH 7 MEETING OF THE ICFTU'S COMMITTEE ON CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS (REFTEL A), AND WILL BE FOUGHT OUT AT FORTHCOMING MEETING OF THE NORDIC TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (NTUC) IN HELSINKI APRIL 9-10. END SUMMARY.

1) IN RESPONSE TO LABATT'S INQUIRY REGARDING THE DANISH LO'S APPARENT NON-INVOLVEMENT IN THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION, SVENNINGSSEN STATED THAT THE DANISH LO WAS, ON THE CONTRARY, HEAVILY INVOLVED IN ATTEMPTING TO RESTRAIN THE EFFORTS OF THE NORWEGIAN AND SWEDISH LO'S TO ESTABLISH DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE INTERSINDICAL. AT THE HEIGHT OF THE CRISIS OVER THE NEW LABOR LAW IN PORTUGAL, RICHARD TRAEELNES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NTUC, PROPOSED INVITING A DELEGATION FROM THE INTERSINDICAL TO VISIT THE TUC. WHEN HE HEARD OF THIS PROPOSAL. SVENNINGSSEN CALLED KAARE SANDEGREN OF THE NORWEGIAN LO TO OBJECT, SAYING THAT SUCH AN INVITATION WOULD UNDERMINE THE POSITION OF THE PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY.

2) AT SVENNINGSSEN'S SUGGESTION, SANDEGREN CALLED FOREIGN MINISTER SOARES IN LISBON, WHO STRONGLY ADVISED AGAINST SUCH AN INVITATION. SVENNINGSSEN SAID HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT SANDEGREN WAS SHAKEN BY SOARES'S REACTION BUT, NONETHELESS, THE INVITATION FROM TRAEELNES WAS TRANSMITTED TO THE INTERSINDICAL DURING THE NEXT FEW DAYS. SVENNINGSSEN IMPLIED THAT TRAEELNES ACTED UNDER PRESSURE FROM OTHER NORWEGIAN LO FIGURES AND, ESPECIALLY, FROM THE SWEDES.

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3) THIS DIVERGENCE OF POLICY REGARDING CONTACTS WITH THE PORTUGUESE LABOR MOVEMENT WAS ALSO THE MAIN STIMULUS BEHIND THE "NORDIC PROPOSAL" FOR A RELAXATION OF THE VIENNA DECLARATION RAISED AT THE MARCH 7 MEETING OF THE ICFTU'S COMMITTEE ON CONTRACTS WITH COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS. THE SCANDINAVIANS HAVE BEEN DISSATISFIED WITH THE ICFTU'S EFFORTS TO DATE IN PORTUGAL. SVENNINGSSEN SAID THE ICFTU REPRESENTATIVE ON

THE SPOT WAS POORLY CHOSEN SINCE HE WAS VULNERABLE TO CHARGES - WHICH HAVE IN FACT BEEN MADE - OF HAVING HAD CIA CONNECTIONS. THE SWEDES AND NORWEGIANS, CONSEQUENTLY, HAD HOPED TO GET ICFTU CONCURRENCE FOR AN INDEPENDENT NTUC ROLE IN PORTUGAL. IT WAS THIS MOVE THAT KJELD AAKJER STRONGLY OPPOSED ON BEHALF OF THE DANISH LO CHAIRMAN, THOMAS NIELSEN (PARA 3, REFTEL A). THE VISIT OF INTER-SINDICAL REPS ALVIRO RANA AND PEDRO CORTEX TO SWEDEN IN THE PARTY OF LABOR MINISTER COSTA MARENS MARCH 17-20 APPARENTLY MOVED THIS PROJECT ONE STEP FORWARD WITH THE "AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE" FOR AN EXCHANGE OF DELEGATIONS BEGINNING IN LATE APRIL (REFTEL B).

4) NORDIC TRADE UNION CONTACTS WITH THE PORTUGUESE LABOR MOVEMENT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT NTUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING IN HELSINKI APRIL 9-10. ICFTU GENSEC OTTO KERSTEN WILL BE PRESENT FOR THAT MEETING, AS ICFTU FINANCIAL PROBLEMS IS A MAJOR AGENDA ITEM. HE WILL, CERTAINLY, ALSO BE INVOLVED IN THE INTER-NORDIC DISCUSSION OF THEIR PORTUGUESE CONNECTION. CROWE

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